



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6502
September 29, 1998

The Honorable David M. McIntosh, Chairman
House Government Reform and Oversight
Subcommittee on National Economic Growth, National Resources, and Regulatory Affairs
1208 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

1998 Excellence in Programmatic Oversight Award

Dear David:

It is my pleasure to announce that you will be receiving an "Excellence in Programmatic Oversight" award for the 105th Congress based on your successful efforts to overturn the Clinton Administration's flawed Executive order on federalism issued on May 14, 1998.

Americans want a government they can trust, stronger leadership, less politics, more effective management and better results for the hard earned tax dollars they send to Washington. Your efforts as chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on National Economic Growth, National Resources, and Regulatory Affairs demonstrate that this Republican Congress is committed to reducing government waste and enhancing government performance through effective congressional oversight.

When performed properly, oversight makes government operate within proper limits by recognizing that the federal government exists to serve the American people, not rule them. It ensures that government spends tax dollars prudently and protects the rights of citizens. Oversight is an educational process, where the light of disclosure shines on a problem or policy of government – raising questions and changing directions as needed. After all, ineffective programs that don't deliver results harm their intended beneficiaries through heightened expectations and broken promises.

Eleven other Members have been similarly honored this year, out of about 110 chairmen in the House, based on the following five criteria: (1) setting up a compelling case for change; (2) showing tenacity, persistence, and creativity in using various tools of oversight (hearings, correspondence, briefings, press, coalitions, GAO work); (3) identifying a subject that was important for the public to understand, or was important for national security; (4) getting sufficient credibility for the project so that it attracted bipartisan support; and (5) forcing a change or solving a problem.

Although there is little sustained *national* press attention to the type of programmatic oversight for which you have been honored, I'm confident that you got the attention of the policy makers most affected by your efforts.

As Chairman, you have done an outstanding job on this and other issues. Your substantive analysis of the new Clinton order and your persistence in educating concerned parties about its effects, built a compelling case that the new order seriously undercut and set back the principles of federalism that had been established by the prior Executive order on this subject issued by the Reagan Administration.

Your commendable efforts on this project included:

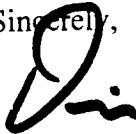
- alerting key State and local government officials to the problem;
- educating your colleagues in the House and Senate;
- holding a timely oversight hearing that demonstrated and solidified bipartisan opposition to the order;
- generating prestigious op-ed criticism of the order; and
- mounting or supporting a series of legislative initiatives, from appropriation riders, to a legislative resolution, to a freestanding bi-partisan bill, that demonstrated Congress' resolve to reverse the order.

The case you mounted was so strong on the merits and generated such a groundswell of opposition that the Clinton Administration was forced to indefinitely suspend the order.

You are invited to H-219 in the Capitol on Thursday, October 1st at 6:15 to receive your award. Photographs will be taken. Please call me or my staff at 5-6600 if you have any questions.

Again, my sincerest and heartiest congratulations for work well done for the American people,
David.

Sincerely,



DICK ARMEY
Member of Congress